REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection and rejection set forth in the above-mentioned Official Action in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Claims Status

Claims 30, 31, 34 through 45, and 47 through 50 remain pending in the application. Claim 51 has been canceled. Claims 43, 45, 49, and 50 have been amended to even more succinctly define the invention and/or to improve their form. It is respectfully submitted that no new matter has been added. Claims 30, 43, 45, 49, and 50 are the only independent claims pending in the application.

Allowable Subject Matter

It is acknowledged with appreciation that Claims 30, 31, 34 through 45, and 47 through 49 are allowed. It is respectfully submitted that the amendments to Claims 43, 45, and 49 presented herein do not affect their allowability.

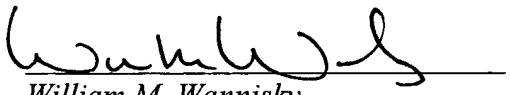
It is also acknowledged with appreciation that Claim 51 is merely objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims. The cancellation of this claim makes the objection moot.

Art Rejection

Claim 50 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese Patent Document No. 4-1690 (Yasuba, et al.). The rationale underlying the rejection is succinctly set forth in the Official Action.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our New York office at the address shown below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Response to Art Rejection

Without conceding the propriety of the rejection and solely to expedite prosecution, Claim 50 has been amended *inter alia* to include the allowable subject matter of Claim 51, which has been canceled. (It is believed that the other amendments to Claim 50 do not affect its allowability.) Accordingly, it is believed that Claim 50 also is now allowable.

Dependent Claims

Claims 31, 34 through 42, 44, 47, and 48 depend either directly or indirectly from one of Claims 30, 43, 45, 49, and 50 and are allowable by virtue of their dependency and in their own right for further defining Applicants' invention. Individual consideration of the dependent claims is respectfully requested.

Closing Comments

It is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance.

This Amendment could not have been presented earlier in the prosecution, inasmuch as it was earnestly believed that the claims heretofore on file were in condition for allowance. No additional claims are presented. It is believed that the Examiner's familiarity with the present application will allow full consideration hereof without the expenditure of undue time and effort.

Favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application are earnestly solicited.